



Message from the Department Chair Connecting Scholars, Promoting Research

Each semester the Department hosts short research conferences which bring nationally-renowned scholars to campus to focus for several days on a topic picked out by UH faculty members. These are always academically exciting opportunities for students and faculty to discuss cutting edge research. In October the department hosted one of these conferences, this time considering the question of "How well do state legislatures represent the public?" **Associate Professor Jennifer Hayes Clark** and **Assistant Professor Justin Kirkland** arranged this meeting, and they and other UH faculty served as discussants or paper givers. Following on the success of the conference, Jennifer and Justin will be guest editing a special issue of *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* focused on Policy Representation in the States late in 2017.

One reason to host these conferences is that they let UH undergraduates and graduate students meet scholars from other universities and engage with



them about their research. Pictured above is graduate student **Kenicia Wright**, presenting a paper that she co-authored with **Assistant Professor Ling Zhu**. We look forward to our next conferences, including one in February on The Political Economy of Representation.

--Susan Scarrow
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Welcome New Faculty

This fall we welcomed two assistant professors to our faculty. **Tyson Chatagnier** adds to the department's growing strength in international political economy and international relations. After earning his Ph.D. at Rochester, he worked for three years at the Bruno Kessler Foundation, in Trento, Italy, before taking a postdoctoral fellowship at Vanderbilt. His research interests include the relationship between economics and international conflict, civil-military relations, and the micro-level components of militarized conflict and military effectiveness.

Boris Shor joins the department by way of Georgetown University, where he was a Visiting Assistant Professor at the Department of Government. Prior to that he was a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Scholar in Health Policy at the University of California, Berkeley, and he taught at the Harris School of Public Policy Studies at the University of Chicago. He earned his Ph.D. from Columbia University. His research on legislative

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The UNOFFICIAL Twitter account for
the UH Department of Political
Science.

New faculty member launches Twitter Account

politics and state politics reinforces the department's long tradition of research strength in these areas; he also has research interests in health care and public policy. An active Tweeter, Dr. Shor has launched a Twitter account to help friends of the Department follow all the latest research from UH Political Science.

New International Affairs Internship

This fall the department launched its new International Affairs Internship Program, supervised by **Assistant Professor Zachary Zwald**. This program helps students to bridge the 'theory-practice' divide by integrating their classroom experiences with the opportunity to gain the skills, perspective, and professional networks necessary for a career in international affairs.

We anticipate that some interns will choose to work in an overseas organization, but in a world city like Houston, students don't need to pay the

costs of overseas travel in order to have an international experience. They may also work in a Houston-area organization with an international focus—e.g., foreign consulates, private corporations (energy, shipping, or finance sectors), foreign chambers of commerce, and human rights organizations. In line with this, the members of the first class of IAIP students are interning at the British consulate, the Houston World Affairs Council, the Mayor's Office of Trade and International Affairs, and several human rights non-governmental organizations.

Undergraduate News

SUMMER SCHOLARS Political Science majors **J Ehlinger, Ana Ibigue Gil, and Camila Escobar** all received Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships in summer 2016. Their research was supervised by **Assistant Professor Ling Zhu** (J. Ehlinger), **Associate Professor Lydia Tiede** and **Assistant Professor Francisco Cantu** (Ana Ibigue) and Comparative Cultural Studies Professor **Christian Eberhardt** (Camila Escobar). The picture *at right* shows Ana Ibigue presenting her research this fall at Undergraduate Research day.

HOUSTON SCHOLARS SUMMER 2016: Three political science majors participated in supervised enrichment activities under the umbrella of the new Houston Scholars program; this program helps top students supplement their classroom learning with complementary research and internship experiences. **Julie Balogh** conducted a summer internship at the U.S. Capitol Office of U.S. Representative Filemon Vela, Jr. **Joshua Freed** conducted research with Victor Mair at the University of Pennsylvania. He studied the accounts of Roman provincial government in Chinese histories, 100-700 C.E. **Chloe Stowell** conducted research with Rob Reich at Stanford on a project studying global justice and the right to education.

STUDY ABROAD FELLOWSHIP **Jessica Espailat** received a Benjamin Gilman Scholarship, sponsored by the U.S. Department of



State, to help support her international studies. She will be studying in Japan in spring 2017.

SUMMER WORKSHOP IN APPLYING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL Five students successfully completed the Department's summer/fall workshop in applying to graduate school. Students **J Ehlinger, Maria Ferreira, Josh Freed, Chloe Stowell** and **Cameron Barrett** met regularly with **Assistant Professor Patrick Shea** to polish their personal statements, chose programs, and navigate financial aid opportunities. Students who completed the program were awarded a scholarship to help them defray the costs of taking the GRE and application fees. These scholarships were generously underwritten by departmental donors.

In Memoriam: Professor Victor Mote

This past summer the Department was saddened by the loss of emeritus faculty member Victor Mote. Professor Mote was a dedicated UH faculty member for 40 years. He was a productive scholar, specializing in Soviet geography, with a particular interest in Siberia, and with expertise on energy and resource issues. He won the Research Excellence Award in the College of Social Sciences in 1979, and the Teaching Excellence Award in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences in 2003. He also served as the Political Science department's graduate advisor and director of undergraduate studies. Professor Mote retired from the faculty in 2011. In November his family and friends gathered at the University of Houston to honor his memory by planting a tree on the campus

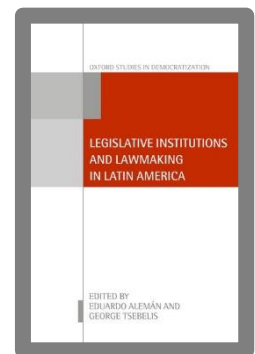


Faculty News

PROMOTIONS Congratulations to **Professor Brandon Rottinghaus** and **Professor Jeremy Bailey** who were promoted to full professor at the beginning of this academic year.

AWARDS At the September 2016 APSA annual meetings **Assistant Professor Boris Shor** received two prizes for a paper he and co-authors presented at the 2015 APSA annual meetings. The paper, "Unequal Incomes, Ideology and Gridlock: How Rising Inequality Increases Political Polarization," was written with John Voorheis and Nolan McCarty.

NEW BOOK Associate Professor **Eduardo Aleman** is the co-editor of the recently published book *Legislative Institutions and Lawmaking in Latin America* (Oxford University Press 2016, co-edited with George Tsebelis). In this volume, twelve experts on Latin American politics investigate the ways in which the interaction between legislative institutions and the policy positions of key actors affects the initiation and passage of legislation. Their analysis covers seven Latin American Countries.



Graduate Students

Congratulations to 5th year graduate student **Matthew Ward**, who won a Distinguished Junior Scholar award from the APSA Political Psychology Section. This travel prize helped to fund his participation in the APSA annual meetings.

Markie McBrayer has been awarded a Future Faculty Fellowship from the University of Houston. The programs associated with this fellowship help students hone their teaching skills while still in graduate school, so that they are well-prepared for this aspect of future academic jobs.

WRAPPING IT UP! **Luke Williams** received his PhD in August 2016 and is spending a year on a research fellowship at Rice University. **Ali Naqvi** received his M.A. in August. **Luai Allarakia** is finishing his dissertation this year while on a teaching fellowship at the University of Houston.

IN PRINT doctoral student Savannah Sipole is the co-author (with Heather Evans) of "From Home-Style to Twitter Style: How Personal, District, and Campaign Characteristics Affect House Candidates' Twitter Style," *Social Media and Politics*, 2016.

Research Focus: Improving Congress

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Many people are surprised to find out that the size of Congressional staffs has remained fixed since 1974. This in spite of an increasingly complex policy environment, and greater demands on staff time in, for example, responding to the flood of e-mail since the late 1990s. The result has been that the U.S. Congress has become more reliant on professional lobbyists for policy expertise and less capable of having a meaningful flow of information with their constituents.

The Congress 3.0 project, conducted by **Associate Professor Ryan Kennedy** along with scholars from Ohio State University, the University of California, Riverside, Northeastern University, Harvard University, and the Congressional Management Foundation, is looking for ways to address this issue. One project explores how to

improve remote town halls, tracking constituent satisfaction to develop best practices in Congressional communication. The study has cooperation from 12 Congressional offices and has been featured in *Roll Call* magazine.



Grad Alumni News

Gregg Murray has moved from Texas Tech to become chair of the Department of Political Science at Augusta University in Georgia. ** After 11 years as city manager of Jersey Village, in the Houston area, this fall **Mike Castro** started a new job as city manager in the city of Murphy, in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. ** **Christina Hughes** was recently hired as a tenure-track assistant professor job teaching political science at the University of Houston-Downtown. ** **David Branham** is the graduate coordinator of the Non-Profit Management Master's program at the University of Houston-Downtown. This on-line program was just rated 5th in the nation.

Many programs profiled in this newsletter have been made possible by donations from Department friends. We appreciate your continued support.



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